

THE PROJECT

Rwanda Project USVI began in the Spring of 2008 when a group of Ivanna Eudora Kean High School students asked their teacher and advisor, Barbara Young, to help them find a way to go to Rwanda to meet the 9-year-old orphan they were sponsoring.

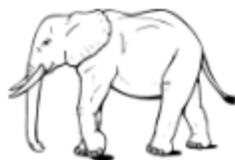
Victoria "Vickie" Umuhoza was about to be forced to leave the boarding school she was attending because she could not pay the tuition when the IEKHS World Religion club learned of her plight and decided to raise the money to cover Vickie's school fees. Not long after raising enough to cover Vickie's school for two years, they approached Ms. Young about the possibility of going to Rwanda.

Realizing that it would take more than bake and t-shirt sales and car washes to raise the money and the consciousness of the students, Young reached out to first lady Cecile deJongh for help.

Together with Young's friend, photographer Sonya Melescu, the fund raising and planning for the trip began..Young and deJongh understood that for the trip to be meaningful and worthwhile the youngsters would need to do more than meet Vickie. And they did!

The group of 11 Virgin Islands teenagers painted, hauled rocks, dug in the dirt, served meals, played with and read to impoverished children and dug some more at several orphan centers around the country. As they watched with amazement at the connections being made between the V.I. teens and the Rwandan children Young, deJongh, and co-founder Shaun Pennington, knew the project had to be ongoing. And not just because of the connections between the children, but also the connection between cultures and values.

The teens had quickly made other connections; connections about what is important in life, and about what brings happiness. Connections about what it means to have nothing materially, and still have joy. They experienced a country and the people that in 14 short years had risen from the dead. And they were changed.



"The Rwanda Project USVI raises consciousness of all involved by fostering an ongoing relationship between the Rwandan people and the people of the USVI ."

Virgin Island Friends

The dream of Rwanda Project USVI could not have happened without major and minor contributors...we wish to acknowledge all of those people, organizations and institutions that made the dream a reality in 2008 ...

Patricia La Corte - Oceana Restaurant
Prior Family Foundation
J. Epstein V.I. Foundation Inc.
Virgin Islands Lottery

Elizabeth Anderson	Warren & Carmen Partridge
Antilles School	Penates Foundation
Anonymous donor from Antilles School	Marjorie Rawls Roberts
Karen Bertrand & William Wilson	Terrlyn P. Smock
J. Bozzuto	Standard Pacific Holdings
Charity Girls	Chris and Barbara Teare
Dockside Bookshop	Lori Thompson
Susan H. Hancock	James and Rebecca Tunick
Michael & [REDACTED]	Angela & Raymond Walters
Kazi Management	Chari B. Ward
Jane Higgins & Jay Lammering	V.I. Source
Julie Paiewonsky-Cassinelli	
Joan Amerling	Kirst & Gina Feddresen
Antilles class of '08	James C. Martin

F. Dean Apple
BGM Engineers & Surveyors
Joyce Bailey
Yanick Bayard
Leslie Faulds-White

Paradise Pax Inc.
Trust of Edyth & Ralph Pasek
Patricia Saxon
Sandra & Jeffrey Smith

Dinner and a Cause

Advertising Production Services	Kim Chisholm
Joan Amerling	Ruth Anne Coe
Dorothy E Anderson	Major & Tanya Coleman
Anointed Worship Restoration Church	Custom Canvas, Inc.
F. Dean Apple	C&D Davis
Brenda Armstrong	Robert & Joan De Lugo
Gerald & Becky Bahlman	J & C DeJongh
Colleen or Ludlow Bailey	Dellia Holodenschi
Susan Baker	Karin Donaldson
Walter & Nancy Bauer	Margie D. Duncan
Daniel & Gita Beck	Lorraine E. Baa Elisha
Erica Benjamin	Esannason Family Living Trust
Claude or Linda Berry	Ivanne Farr
Blackhall & Co. Real Estate	Richard & Debra Farrelly
Alicia S Boatwright	Yugonda M. Ferrero
Bonnie Braga	Bridget Gallagher
Elizabeth Buckalew	Julia C Gardner
Pamela Reid Bussard	Janet Geesen
Lisa C. Butler	Katherine Gibson
Deborah Carnaroli	Mary Gleason
Darby Carstarphen	L & H Goldman
Tricia S. Cassinelli	Shansi Grabfelder
Susan H Hancock	Bonnie Gray
Veronica J. Handy	Jude Roeder Gumbs
Michael & Linda Hantman	Lara Halliday
Susan J. Harmer	Terry Halpern
Jonetta Darden Hill	Ruth A. Magnuson
Cherre E. Hughes	Liza J. Margolis
Akan & Brenda Iniyama	Stephen & June Marsh
Carol & Terrance Jacobs	Leslie Maxwell
N & J Jones	Dolace Nicole McLean
Judith Kaplan	James P. & Georgeann P.

Charlene M. Kehoe	McNicholas
Kelly Krause	Dave & Margaret Miller
Kerry Klein	Daniela Miller
Knot's Away Studio	Caryl Ayn Mitchell
Denise S. Kurg	Martha or Curtis Lee Moron
Desiree Lacharite	Molly Morris
Jean Lambert	Amalia H. & George E. Morrissey
Jane Higgins & Jay Lammering	April Moran Newland
Amelia Lamont & Bruce	Linda Nogales
Marshack	James & Linda O'Toole
Evelyn Larocque	Diana M Parker
Donna J Liska	Teri Pearsall
Hugh and Suzanne Mabe	Shaun Pennington
RM Beachfront LLC	Peggy Simmons Sarah N. or
Gary Rosenthal & Judith Slosky	Mary L. Huskey
Marshan Sam	Patricia C. Phelan
Sea Grape Spa & Fitness Center	Jackson Purkey
R. & V Silver	Pamela R. Tepper
Caroll Sirhakis	Frances S. Thomas
	T & B Tyne
Michelle A. Smitherman	Carolyn Tyson
Soft Touch Boutique, Inc.	Rhea T. Vasconcellos
Mariaclara Stryker	VI Desserts LLC
Fiona M. Stuart	Rebecca E. Weiss
Eunice Summer	Roger & Diana White
Amanda M. Symkens	Kimberly A. Young
Elena Tagini	

Thanks to Sonya Melescu for her contributions to Rwanda Project 2008

Special thanks to:

Lambert Media
Billy D
Dee Baecher-Brown, Carlyn Wesley and the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands
Sally George
Ruth Caplin of Happy and Free Studios
Ivanna Eudora Kean High School

And a very special "thank you" to our dear Rwandan friends who made our trip safe, comfortable, well informed and unique!

Frederic "Freddy" Budaramani
First Lady Jeannette Kagame

Rwanda is a poor rural country with about 85% of the population engaged in (mainly subsistence) agriculture and some mineral and agro-processing. In 2008, minerals overtook coffee and tea as Rwanda's primary foreign exchange earner. The 1994 genocide decimated Rwanda's fragile economic base, severely impoverished the population, particularly women, and temporarily stalled the country's ability to attract private and external investment. However, Rwanda has made substantial progress in stabilizing and rehabilitating its economy to pre-1994 levels. GDP has rebounded and inflation has been curbed. Nonetheless, a majority still live below the poverty line of 250 Rwandan francs per day (about US\$0.43). Despite Rwanda's fertile ecosystem, food production often does not keep pace with demand, requiring food imports. Rwanda continues to receive substantial aid money and obtained IMF-World Bank Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative debt relief in 2005-06. Rwanda also received a



Millennium Challenge Account Compact in 2008. Africa's most densely populated country is trying to overcome the limitations of its small, landlocked economy by leveraging regional trade. Rwanda joined the East African Community and is aligning its budget, trade, and immigration policies with its regional partners. The government has embraced an expansionary fiscal policy to reduce poverty by improving education, infrastructure, and foreign and domestic investment and pursuing market-oriented reforms, although energy shortages, instability in neighboring states, and lack of adequate transportation linkages to other countries continue to handicap growth. The global downturn hurt export demand and tourism while poor rains this year have lowered growth in agriculture.